

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SEC-03 EB-11 L-03 SS-15 NSC-10 PA-03

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FM AMCONSUL NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4264

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE WASHDC

UNCLAS NASSAU 704

DEPARTMENT PASS SEC WASHDC

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN PINT BF

SUBJ: VESCO' S ACTIVITIES IN BAHAMAS QUESTIONED

1. AT A MEETING OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON MAY 30, OPPOSITION FNM MEMBER CLEOPHAS ADDERLEY POSED A SERIES OF QUESTIONS TO PRIME MINISTER PINDLING REGARDING THE ACTIVITIES OF ROBERT VESCO AND HIS CANADIAN ASSOCIATE NORMAN LEBLANC. ADDERLEY ASKED IF THE TWO HAVE BEEN PLACED ON THE GOVERNMENT' S IMMIGRATION STOP LIST (WHICH BARS ENTRY OF UNWANTED ALIENS). IF NOT HE WANTED TO KNOW IF SUCH ACTION WAS CONTEMPLATED AND IF NOT, WHY NOT. THE PRIME MINISTER WAS QUERIED ABOUT HIS AWARENESS OF THE BUSINESS ACTIVITIES OF THE TWO, THEIR ASSOCIATES AND/ OR COMPANIES PARTICULARLY AS RELATED TO THE ACQUISITION OF BANKS, TRUST COMPANIES AND OTHER SUBSTANTIAL BUSINESS INTERESTS IN THE COUNTRY.

2. MORE IMPORTANTLY THE PRIME MINISTER WAS ASKED IF SUCH INVOLVEMENT IS CONDUCIVE TO THE CONDUCT OF GOOD BUSINESS IN THE BAHAMAS AND WHETHER HE FELT IT WOULD REFLECT FAVORABLY ON THE INTERNATIONAL REPUTATION OF THE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY AS A FINANCIAL CENTER. THE QUESTIONS ALSO RAISED THE POSSIBILITY OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST BY THE PM OR HIS MINISTERS

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BECAUSE OF ASSOCIATION, INVOLVEMENT OR ARRANGEMENT WITH VESCO, LEBLANC OR THEIR ASSOCIATES. IF SO, ADDERLEY ASKED FOR ASSURANCES THAT APPROPRIATE STEPS WOULD BE TAKEN TO AVOID SUCH CONFLICT AND THAT THE HOUSE BE INFORMED OF THESE STEPS.

3. PINDLING WAS READY TO ANSWER THE QUESTION REGARDING THE STOP LIST, BUT ADDERLEY REQUESTED HE HOLD THAT ANSWER UNTIL NEXT WEEK' S HOUSE SESSION.

4. IN A NEWSPAPER COLUMN ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO FNM SENATOR ARTHUR FOULKES HAD RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER VESCO' S ACTIVITIES HERE WERE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COUNTRY.

5. COMMENT: THE NEWSPAPER COLUMN AND THE QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE INDICATE THAT THE OPPOSITION IS LATCHING ON TO THE VESCO QUESTION AS A POLITICAL ISSUE A LA THE COSTA RICAN EXAMPLE.
SPEAR

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